

Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research

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Agenda Item 13

Other Business

CGIAR Linkages with UNCED: Progress Report

The attached progress report on CGIAR linkages with UNCED serves as background to the presentation that will be made by the Executive Secretary under "Other Business" at International Centers Week.

Attachment

Distribution

CGIAR Members
Center Board Chairmen
Center Directors
TAC Chairman
TAC Members
TAC Secretariat
Observers

CGIAR Linkages with UNCED

Background

1. At the Paris mid-term meeting (May 1991), the Group decided that the CGIAR system should associate itself with the forthcoming United Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED).
2. The Group felt that such an association would ensure that the agricultural perspective on environmental issues could be built into the UNCED process, and that CGIAR expertise could be available for post-UNCED programs.
3. UNCED will be held at Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. It will be preceded by four meetings of a preparatory committee chaired by Ambassador Tommy Koh of Singapore, and by a series of international negotiations concerning the main draft documentation for UNCED. To facilitate these activities, the UNCED Secretariat in Geneva has organized a number of working parties dealing with Atmosphere, Biodiversity, Biotechnology, Environment and Development, Environmental Education, Forestry, Freshwater Resources, Information, Land Resources and Agriculture, Oceans, and Technology Transfer. The Secretary General of UNCED is Mr. Maurice F. Strong of Canada, who was closely associated with the founding of the CGIAR.
4. In keeping with the Group's decision at Paris, the Executive Secretary of the CGIAR requested observer status for the CGIAR at all UNCED meetings. The CGIAR as a corporate entity and IBPGR have been recognized as observers. In granting the CGIAR observer status, Mr. Strong said in a letter to the CGIAR Executive Secretary:

"I am very impressed with the extent of work in agriculture, food productivity and environment that CGIAR is currently involved in... As you are aware, land and agriculture issues play a considerable role in the UNCED process. They are also implicated by the various cross sectoral issues being discussed."
5. Several CGIAR initiatives have since been undertaken to establish, in the UNCED context, an awareness of the critical relationship between agriculture and natural resource management. These initiatives are directed at supporting UNCED, and incorporating the CGIAR knowledge-base in the environment and development matrix that is expected to emerge from UNCED. In this connection, the subject areas chosen for concentration are biodiversity, with particular emphasis on plant genetic resources, agricultural sustainability, biotechnology, and capacity building.

Representation

1. The CGIAR and IBPGR were represented at the third meeting of the UNCED preparatory committee which was held at Geneva (August/September), taking active roles in the working parties on biodiversity and biotechnology. Both will attend the fourth and final meeting of the committee to be held at New York in March/April 1992.
2. The CGIAR and IBPGR will be represented at UNCED as observers. A CGIAR information booth is planned for UNCED.
3. The CGIAR will also be working closely with the Global NGO Forum to be held at Rio during UNCED.

Activities

A. Programs

1. The CGIAR's main role in providing inputs to and possibly participating in the implementation of post-UNCED Programs of Work is in the sectors of:
 - sustainability of agriculture,
 - conservation and use of plant genetic resources, and
 - capacity building, which includes training and institution building.
2. Three Directors General have taken leadership roles in the UNCED effort:
 - Mr. Don Winkelmann (CIMMYT), organizing public awareness work.
 - Mr. Geoff Hawtin (IBPGR), in charge of biodiversity and plant genetic resources.
 - Mr. Hubert Zandstra (CIP), coordinating work on agricultural sustainability.

Mr. Don Plucknett, Science Adviser, serves as the contact person at the CGIAR Secretariat.
3. CGIAR centers have been working with national delegations in donor and partner countries to assist them in the preparation of agriculture-related documents and presentations for UNCED.
4. IBPGR is a member of the UNCED working party on biodiversity. In this capacity, IBPGR is contributing to the substance of documentation on biodiversity that will be the basis of decisions on this issue at UNCED.
5. The CGIAR has been an active participant in the Keystone International Dialogue Series on Plant Genetic Resources which recommended in its Oslo Plenary Session a Global Initiative on the Security and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources. The CGIAR is listed as one possible institutional home for the Global Initiative, with proposed funding of \$300 million a year, if CGIAR

members agree. At the third UNCED preparatory committee meeting last August, Norway, on behalf of the Nordic countries, officially introduced the Oslo Report as a program for formal consideration. A major platform for the CGIAR's role in UNCED biodiversity efforts could be the Oslo report of the Keystone Dialogue.

6. The agriculture/environment relationship as the basis of future research was the focus of the recent Bangkok Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture (1991). The Declaration expresses the resolve of Asian scientists...

... "to recommit ourselves and our institutions to strengthen further the knowledge base that will ensure the protection of land, water resources and other environmental resources required for agricultural productivity in the future; to seek ways to collaborate in research on pressing problems affecting agricultural sustainability and to find ways to finance collaborative research, including increased funding from national and international sources."

The CGIAR helped to organize the scientific conference at which the Declaration was adopted. The CGIAR Secretariat has submitted the Declaration to the Secretary General of UNCED.

7. A report of the Council of the Club of Rome, The First Global Revolution (1991), has recommended that FAO and the CGIAR "undertake a study on Energy in Agriculture with a view to recommending means of reducing energy inputs in agriculture and, at the same time, of lessening agriculture's emission of greenhouse gases."
8. The CGIAR has entered into a dialogue with several NGOs which are active on environmental issues. On October 22, Center Directors and research managers met representatives of the NGO community for a dialogue on Plant Genetic Resources. The meeting was held at the World Bank. Mr. Michael Lesnick of the Keystone Center served as facilitator. Representatives of the NGO community included those closely involved with the UNCED discussions such as the Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI), headed by Mr. Pat Roy Mooney. The meeting focused on where the NGOs and the CGIAR can meet on common ground, and how the work of the other could be utilized in a constructive fashion.
9. The CGIAR and IBPGR are actively participating in UNCED preparations by providing materials for distribution at the fourth meeting of the preparatory committee in March/April and at UNCED itself. Following up on the recent visit to ICW91 of a representative of the UNCED Secretary-General we are now providing comments on a series of documents prepared for the fourth preparatory committee session.

B. Public Awareness

1. The CGIAR Public Awareness Association chaired by Mr. Don Winkelmann, has made UNCED a focus of its activities in the period between now and UNCED.
2. A representative of the UNCED Secretariat participated in the Oct. 28 press briefing held in connection with the opening of ICW91. A series of international press briefings has been planned to stress the agriculture/environment linkage. The first round of briefings will be held in Europe, involving CGIAR centers, donors, and NGOs.
3. A CGIAR booklet on Sustainability, commissioned by Mr. Hubert Zandstra, Chairman of the CGIAR Committee on Sustainable Agriculture, was published this week in the CGIAR Secretariat series, "Issues in Agriculture," and will be widely distributed within the "UNCED community."
4. IBPGR is preparing 10 fact sheets on the following topics:
 - plant genetic resources, their role and importance within the context of biodiversity;
 - importance of plant genetic resources in relation to environmental concerns;
 - importance of plant genetic resources for development;
 - the need for training in plant genetic resources conservation and use;
 - information systems in plant genetic resources conservation and use;
 - the need for research;
 - plant genetic resources and the CGIAR;
 - plant genetic resources and IBPGR/IPGRI; and
 - towards a global system for plant genetic resources conservation.
5. IBPGR also plans early publication of the 1992 issue of Geneflow, focusing on biodiversity and the role of CGIAR; and a poster and exhibit for UNCED on "Biodiversity and Plant Genetic Resources." Conserving the Wild Relatives of Crops, jointly published by IBPGR, IUCN, and WWF (1988) is being considered for distribution at UNCED. The 1989 booklet Partners in Conservation. Plant Genetic Resources and the CGIAR is likely to be updated for distribution at UNCED and among NGOs.
6. CIMMYT is preparing a pamphlet on Creating Biodiversity and CIAT on Savanna Development.